

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-02 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15
USIA-15 IO-13 TRSE-00 ACDA-10 DHA-02 EB-08 COME-00
OMB-01 STR-04 AID-05 IGA-02 OES-06 FEAE-00 ERDA-07
/127 W

-----121905Z 040667 /50

R 121815Z APR 77

FM AMEMBASSY BONN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7325

INFO AMEMBASSY BERLIN

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY ROME

USMISSION USBERLIN

USMISSION NATO BRUSSELS

AMCONSUL BREMEN

AMCONSUL DUSSELDORF

AMCONSUL FRANKFURT

AMCONSUL HAMBURG

AMCONSUL MUNICH

AMCONSUL STUTTGART

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT, PGEN, PFOR, US, UR, GW

SUBJECT: STRAUSS INTERVIEW IN "DIE WELT"

BEGIN SUMMARY: IN A "DIE WELT" INTERVIEW
PUBLISHED APRIL 12, FRANZ JOSEF STRAUSS COMMENTED INTER
ALIA ON US-EUROPEAN RELATIONS, USSR INTENTIONS, AND THE
GERMAN POLITICAL SCENE. HE DISHED OUT LARGE
AMOUNTS OF CRITICISM AND ANALYSIS, IN TERMS THAT ARE
CONSISTENT WITH HIS EARLIER PUBLIC AND PRIVATE STATEMENTS.
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WE SUMMARIZE HIS MAJOR POINTS IN THIS CABLE. END
SUMMARY.

1. IN ITS APRIL 12 EDITION, RIGHT-CENTER "DIE WELT"
PUBLISHED A LENGTHY INTERVIEW WITH CSU CHAIRMAN FRANZ
JOSEF STRAUSS. THE INTERVIEW COVERS SOME FOREIGN
POLICY ISSUES AND THE MORE SENSITIVE ASPECTS OF THE

DOMESTIC POLITICAL SCENE: THE FDP AND COALITION PROSPECTS, THE AFTERMATH OF KREUTH, AND BERLIN. WE SUMMARIZE THE KEY POINTS IN THE FOLLOWING PARAGRAPHS.

2. FRG FOREIGN POLICY. STRAUSS ACCUSED THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT OF NOT MAKING FOREIGN POLICY BUT RATHER ISSUING "NICE-SOUNDING COMMUNIQUE" AND COMMONPLACES. HE ATTRIBUTED THIS BEHAVIOR TO TWO FACTORS: THE COALITION HAS FRITTERED AWAY ITS PUBLIC SUPPORT, AND IT CANNOT OVERCOME THE CENTRIFUGAL PULLS IN ITS OWN RANKS. AIDED BY THE PHRASING OF THE QUESTIONS, STRAUSS DREW A SHARP BEAD ON THE COALITION'S OSTPOLITIK, DETENTE POLICY, AND ALLEGED MBFR DIVERGENCES BETWEEN SPD FRAKTION CHIEF HERBERT WEHNER AND FDP LEADER GENSCHER.

3. USA. STRAUSS SAID THAT THE CURRENT PERIOD IS ONE OF THE MOST CRITICAL SINCE 1945, IN PART BECAUSE THE USG HAS NOT YET RECOVERED FROM VIETNAM, WATERGATE, AND THE PARALYSIS OF ITS INTELLIGENCE SERVICES. WITH AN EYE TO THE DOMESTIC DIFFICULTIES CONFRONTING THE USSR, HE STRONGLY BACKED PRESIDENT CARTER'S CAMPAIGN FOR HUMAN RIGHTS, TWICE DECLARING THAT EUROPE MUST SUPPORT THE PRESIDENT IN THIS RESPECT. STRAUSS WARNED, HOWEVER, THAT THE PRESIDENT SHOULD NOT AROUSE ANY HOPES "WHOSE FULFILLMENT THE USA IS NOT READY TO GUARANTEE."

4. USSR. STRAUSS DWELT AT LENGTH ON THE AGGRESSIVE USSR ARMS BUILDUP WHICH, IN HIS VIEW, HAS GIVEN MOSCOW UNCLASSIFIED

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SUPERIORITY IN CONVENTIONAL WEAPONS AND "AT LEAST" EQUALITY IN STRATEGIC ONES. HE REGRETTED THAT THE WEST, BY ITS LONG-TERM CREDITS AND OTHER TRADE POLICIES, HAS MADE IT EASIER FOR MOSCOW TO PURSUE THESE ENDS. STRAUSS EXPRESSED CONCERN OVER THE SIZE OF SOVIET INDEBTEDNESS TO THE WEST BUT RULED OUT ANY FREEZE ON EASTERN TRADE. HOWEVER, HE EXPLICITLY OPPOSED ANY (A) TRANSMISSION OF KNOW-HOW WHICH DIRECTLY OR INDIRECTLY PROMOTES SOVIET ARMAMENTS OR (B) CREDITS FOR FACILITIES THAT ENABLE MOSCOW "MORE EASILY TO MANAGE ITS PROBLEMS AT HOME."

5. US-EUROPE. IN RESPONSE TO A QUERY ON EUROPEAN DOUBTS OVER PRESIDENT CARTER'S POLICIES, STRAUSS SAW A DANGER THAT THE US AND EUROPE MIGHT DRIFT APART. TO COUNTERACT THIS, HE CALLED FOR A RATIONAL US-EUROPEAN FOREIGN POLICY AND DIVISION OF LABOR.

A. STRAUSS LISTED SEVERAL AREAS OF "POSSIBLE AGREEMENT" BETWEEN EUROPEAN AND AMERICAN POLICY: (1) SUPPORT FOR A LIBERAL WORLD ECONOMY BUT OPPOSITION TO GLOBAL COMMODITY CARTELS; (2) REFORM OF NATO DEFENSE DOCTRINE TO TAKE ACCOUNT OF SOVIET ACTIVITIES IN THE NORTHERN REGION, THE MEDITERRANEAN, AND SOUTHERN AFRICA; (3) SUPPORT OF HUMAN RIGHTS AS AN INTEGRAL PART OF

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DETENTE POLICY; AND (4) A EUROPEAN READINESS TO SHARE RESPONSIBILITY WITH THE US, AT LEAST ON A REGIONAL BASIS.

B. IN THREE AREAS STRAUSS CRITICIZED THE USG. HE EXPLICITLY SUPPORTED CHANCELLOR SCHMIDT'S STAND IN RESISTING USG EFFORTS FOR "INFLATIONARY EXPANSION" AND AN AMENDMENT OF THE NUCLEAR TREATY WITH BRAZIL.
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IN THIS CONNECTION, HE DECLARED THAT "WE ARE NOT SERVANTS BUT PARTNERS OF THE AMERICANS." ASKED ABOUT US/CANADIAN STOPPAGE OF URANIUM SHIPMENTS, STRAUSS ALSO RULED OUT ANY ECONOMIC WAR BETWEEN ALLIANCE PARTNERS WHICH INVOLVED USING BLOCKED DELIVERIES OF "INDISPENSABLE RAW MATERIALS" TO APPLY POLITICAL PRESSURE.

6. SPD/FDP COALITION. STRAUSS DECLARED THAT THE COALITION PARTIES ARE HOLDING TOGETHER MORE FOR THE SAKE OF STAYING IN POWER THAN FOR ANY HIGHER PURPOSE. HE SAID THAT THE FDP PREFERS A COALITION WITH A LAME PARTNER TO A CHANGE IN PARTNERS WHICH WOULD RELEASE DISSENT IN ITS OWN RANKS. STRAUSS EMPHASIZED THAT THE OPPOSITION MUST BEGIN WITH A SOBER-MINDED ANALYSIS OF THESE FACTS, AND HE STRONGLY WARNED (UNNAMED) UNION POLITICIANS AGAINST ASSUMING AN IDENTITY OF INTEREST BETWEEN THE CDU AND THE FDP. STRAUSS BLASTED THE FDP AS CO-RESPONSIBLE FOR THE FAILURES SINCE 1969, PARTICULARLY IN EDUCATIONAL POLICY IN LAENDER WHERE THE SPD/FDP COALITION GOVERNS. DESPITE STRONG PRODDING, STRAUSS REFUSED TO COMMIT HIMSELF AS TO HOW THE CSU WILL VIEW WALTER SCHEEL'S CANDIDACY FOR A SECOND TERM AS FEDERAL PRESIDENT.

7. CDU/CSU RELATIONS. IN GENERAL, STRAUSS WORKED TO DISPEL THE IMPRESSION OF DISCORD IN THE UNION. HE DOWNPLAYED THE KREUTH DECISION BY DECLARING THAT IT HAD WROUGHT NO DAMAGE BUT HAD RATHER SPURRED THE CDU/CSU TO NEW STRATEGIC THINKING. STRAUSS DISCLAIMED ANY CSU DESIRE FOR TENSIONS WITH THE CDU, BUT HE ALSO CRITICIZED THE UNION PARTIES FOR MISSTEPS IN THE PAST WHICH HAD MADE THEM "NOT SO IMMUNE TO JUSTIFIED CRITICISM." STRAUSS INTONED ON THE NEED FOR THE UNION TO ELABORATE, AND FIGHT HARDER FOR, ITS BASIC POSITIONS. HE SAID THAT THE STRATEGY COMMISSION WILL SERVE THAT END BY DIVIDING
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UP AREAS OF RESPONSIBILITY.

8. BERLIN. STRAUSS SAID THAT BERLIN SUFFERS FROM
A PROCESS OF PSYCHOLOGICAL AND ECONOMIC DEBILITATION,
AND HE CALLED FOR COURAGE TO CONFRONT PROBLEMS IN THE
CITY. THOUGH HE AGREED WITH SCHMIDT'S CRITICISM ABOUT
LOW LEVELS OF INVESTMENT IN BERLIN, HE CRITICIZED BONN
FOR LACKING THE COURAGE TO PLACE THE NATIONAL FOUNDATION
(NATIONALSTIFTUNG) THERE.
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Message Attributes

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TAGS: PINT, EGEN, PFOR, US, UR, GE, DIE WELT, (STRAUSS, FRANZ JOSEF)
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